



January 14, 2010

Haiti Relief Support

"This is a time when we are reminded of the common humanity that we all share. With just a few hundred miles of ocean between us and a long history that binds us together, Haitians are neighbors of the Americas and here at home. So we have to be there for them in their hour of need."

– President Barack Obama

In response to the magnitude-7.0 earthquake that struck southern Haiti on Jan. 12, knocking down buildings, power lines and destroying infrastructure in the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, the President of the United States has called for a swift, coordinated and aggressive response. As U.S. Southern Command is assessing the military disaster response needs in Haiti, the U.S. Navy is mobilizing resources in response to and in anticipation of requirements. The Navy's flexible and ready forces are mobilizing from the east and west coasts in support of U.S. government relief efforts.

Mobilizing Flexible and Ready Forces

- USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) has been ordered to deploy to Haiti to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster response. Vinson is underway in the Atlantic Ocean proceeding directly to Haiti.
- USS Bataan (LHD 5), USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) and USS Carter Hall (LSD 50) are underway en route Haiti and will embark Marines from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit.
- USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44), originally tasked to deploy for Africa Partnership Station, has been diverted to Haiti.
- USS Normandy (CG 60) and USS Underwood (FFG 36) have deployed from their homeports to assist.
- USNS Comfort (T-AH-20), homeported in Baltimore, Md., will get underway Saturday morning. The ship has been activated to full operating status, expanding crew and hospital staff, loading supplies and testing systems.
- Three Navy P-3 Orion aircraft are conducting aerial surveys of the area affected by the earthquake.
- USS Higgins (DDG 76), homeported in San Diego, Calif., is on station off the coast of Haiti to provide afloat logistical services following her assignment in the 6th Fleet area of responsibility as a ballistic missile defense platform.
- Various units are prepared to provide assistance with sea-based helicopters, to include H-53 Sea Stallions and H-60 Seahawks.
- Navy expeditionary forces are deploying to provide on-scene assessment, construction, security, civil affairs and logistical support.

A Core Capability of Maritime Forces

- Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response is a core capability of U.S. maritime forces. In times of crisis, human suffering is mitigated by interagency and multinational efforts that build on established relationships.
- Human suffering moves us to act, and the expeditionary character of U.S. maritime forces uniquely positions them to provide assistance.
- When natural disasters strike, maritime forces provide humanitarian assistance and relief, joining with interagency and non-governmental partners.

Key Messages

- The people of Haiti have the unwavering support of the American people in their time of need.
- The U.S. Navy is aggressively providing a swift and coordinated response to assist Haiti.
- The U.S. Navy is mobilizing available resources to assist interagency and multinational efforts in assessing damage and relieving human suffering in Haiti.

Facts & Figures

- 19 helicopters embarked on USS Carl Vinson are immediately being sent to support relief efforts with more on the way.
- Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command directs U.S. naval forces operating in the Caribbean, Central and South American regions and interaction with regional partner nation navies.